



Cultivating more Equitable and Inclusive Communities through Planning

*A Get Started and Go Deeper Guide
for Planning Practitioners*



About this workbook...

The following pages contain a number of resources and activities to support Planning practitioners in understanding, developing and implementing equity, diversity and inclusion as a core practice and organizational value.

The workbook begins a **Frequently Asked Questions** section which is not only meant to answer questions you may have but to also help you in answering questions others may have in conversations about equity. They are meant to arm you with talking points to respond to common questions and concerns that come up most often.

You will then complete a **questionnaire** to help assess the readiness of your organization to initiate or deepen the practice of equity. This assessment is by no means comprehensive and you should implement a more robust assessment process if possible but it is a good place to start. We recommend doing this questionnaire in a group (such as an internal equity, diversity and inclusion committee or with your executive leadership) - and then have some discussion about where you feel your organization is.

You are then invited to complete a **self-assessment** to explore your own growth opportunity areas related to your advocacy of the practices of equity and inclusion.

There are then several resources including **key terminology**, a **“required reading” list**, **three activities for you to facilitate in your organization** and a list of **additional resources and tools** you may find helpful on your journey.

This contents of this workbook were compiled by employing a theory of change that necessitates a multi-level approach to more equitable and inclusive planning practices and organizations - please see the FAQs section for more information.



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Key Terminology

Equity - A need for fairness (not necessarily equality) in the distribution of gains and losses, and the entitlement of everyone to an acceptable quality and standard of living.

Race - While often assumed to be a biological classification, based on physical and genetic variation, racial categories do not have a scientific basis. However, the consequences of racial categorization are real, as the ideology of race has become embedded in our identities, institutions, and culture, and is used as a basis for discrimination and racial profiling. How one is racialized is a major determinant of one's socioeconomic status and life opportunities

Ethnicity - An ethnic group is a human population whose members identify with each other, usually on the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry. Ethnic groups are also usually united by common cultural, behavioural, linguistic, or religious practices.

Institutional/Structural Racism or Racialized Oppression - The ways in which history, culture, ideology, public policies, institutional practices, and personal behaviors and beliefs interact to maintain a hierarchy – based on race, class, gender, sexuality, and/or other group identities – that allows the privileges associated with the dominant group and the disadvantages associated with the oppressed, targeted, or marginalized group to endure and adapt over time.

Interpersonal Racism/Oppression - Oppression during interactions between people. This can happen between people within the same oppressed group, between people from different oppressed groups, or between people from an oppressed group and people from a non-oppressed group.

Prejudice - A judgment or opinion that is formed on insufficient grounds before facts are known or in disregard of facts that contradict it. Prejudices can be learned and unlearned.

Unconscious/Implicit Bias - The bias in judgement and/or behavior that results from the subtle cognitive process (i.e. implicit attitudes and implicit stereotypes) that often operate at a level below conscious awareness and without intentional control.

Intersectionality - the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Microaggressions - a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group such as a racial or ethnic minority.

White Supremacy Culture - A system of domination based on race (which is an arbitrary social construction) in which white people maintain power and privilege at the expense of people of color – impacting both communities of color within the United States and other nations – for the purpose of gaining power and wealth. Also known as racism.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is it important for Planners to prioritize equity and inclusion? When we look each and every quality of life indicator we see that there are clear inequities across race and socioeconomic status. From health outcomes to housing and homelessness to environmental injustice to education and income - Planning as a field has, either presently or over time, influenced these outcomes. Current trends show inequities exacerbating across the state of California and People of Color and low-income Californians bear the brunt of those inequities. Given these structural inequities, it has become more urgent that Planning make equity a priority and explicitly counteract the current trends if we are to remain a diverse, equitable and inclusive state. Equity outcomes are the result of centuries of interconnected systems and structures that privilege some groups while disadvantaging and oppressing other groups. The field of Planning is only one actor in a vast and complex web of local, regional, state, and national institutions which makes building a movement for equity across the state even more critical.

What is the difference between Equality and Equity? Oftentimes Equity and Equality are used interchangeably but there are some important distinctions between them especially for government officials and those interacting with community members to consider. Simply put: Equality means everyone gets the same and Equity means everyone gets what they need. Equity ensures that past and present contexts and impacts inform the creation of strategies, resources, priorities, etc.. Equity recognizes that the impact of an action is more important than the intention behind it and that intention and impact are often not aligned.

How are diversity, inclusion and equity different? Diversity is being at the table, inclusion is joining the conversation and equity empowering everyone to work together to set the agenda, make decisions and ask the most critical of questions: Who's at the table? Who's not? How can we get them here?

Why is addressing racial inequity seen as such a high priority? Historically speaking, the very foundation of US governmental policies, American culture and our economic system has been the oppression of people based upon race. From genocide of indigenous populations, the enslavement of Africans, internment of the Japanese cross every single indicator, even when controlling for income, we see disparities across race. In fact, there are clear ties between [Capitalism and American Slavery](#). When we think about Planning in particular - the racialized nature of our [housing system](#) both historically and presently has shaped population-level outcomes for generations. Racial Equity is a high priority because focus and specificity are necessary to have maximum impact. Strategies to achieve racial equity differ from those to achieve equity in other areas. So-called "color-blind" or "one-size-fits all" strategies are rarely successful. California is in the midst of a housing crisis in its urban centers and significant economic inequity in suburban and exurban communities - and Californians of color in all regions of the state are faring worse than their white counterparts.

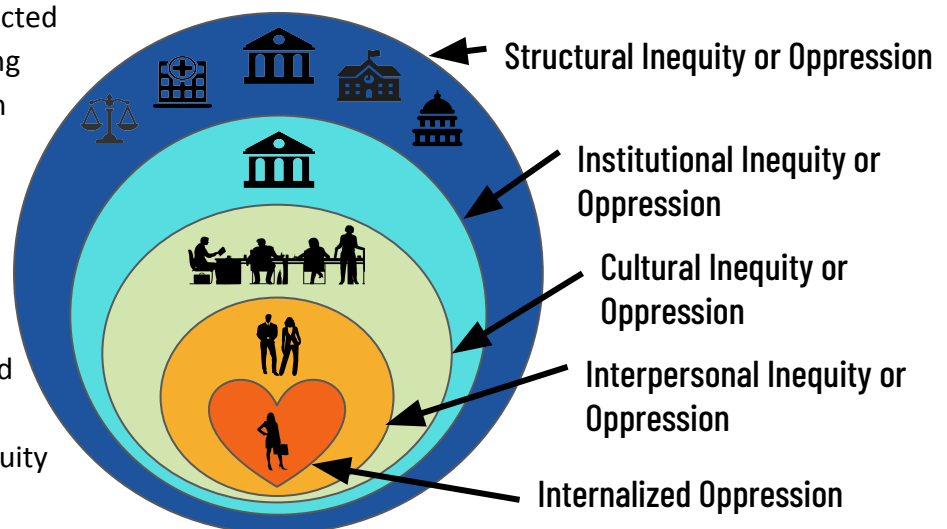
If we're prioritizing racial equity, what about all the other groups? Won't they get left out? It is true that other groups of people are still marginalized such as women and trans people, members of the LGBTQ+ community, those with differing physical abilities, as well as many other identities. Because racial inequities are the most salient in US society, we limit our impact to improve outcomes for other marginalized groups when we don't lead with race (cont.).

Frequently Asked Questions

Example: Homelessness amongst veterans is high in many cities across California. Yet, amongst homeless veterans, we see higher proportions of black veterans than other groups. In this example, we see that race (Black) furthers inequity for an already marginalized group (Veterans). provides the opportunity to introduce a framework, tools and resources that can also be applied to other areas of marginalization. Also, race can be an issue that keeps other marginalized communities from effectively coming together - one of the greatest historic and contemporary examples of this are voting trends amongst low-income and rural White Americans who share economic interests with other low-income and rural communities of color but often vote counter to those shared interests. Studies have shown that race and racism are significant drivers for voters. An approach that recognizes the inter-connected ways in which marginalization takes place will help to achieve greater unity across communities.

Why is it important to address interpersonal inequity and organizational culture? Shouldn't we just focus on the external work of Planning departments and organizations?

The graphic at right illustrates the interconnected and complex nature of inequity. The outer ring represents structural inequities or oppression examples which are the **confluence** of Inequity across institutions such as housing and education that intersect to drive larger structural inequity. The light blue ring represents inequities at the institutional or organizational level which are both influenced by and influence the two adjacent levels (dark blue and green). Green represents inequity or oppression at the cultural level which is essentially the expression of interpersonal inequity or oppression at the interpersonal level (light orange). The dark orange center represents the individual responsibility and impact each and every one of us have on driving greater equity at all levels *and* the fact that we are, indeed, influenced by other levels of inequity and oppression. In short, we cannot drive greater structural or institutional equity without adopting and retaining equitable practices within the inner levels as well.



Isn't talking about race and racism a bad thing? Won't it just create more division? All of the data demonstrates that structural racism exists and Planning has a unique role and history in driving racial inequities at the systemic and local level. Furthermore, our institutions exist in a society that is highly racialized and not a single organization is immune to the impacts of that socialization. These two factors have very specific outcomes for both our work as Planners and our Planning workplaces. The influences of race are all around us and if we are unable to name the problem because of discomfort we will never be able to solve it. The practice of equity requires us to build a resilience to discomfort so that we can proactively name, address and mitigate for further inequities in our work and workplace.

Setting a baseline with:



ASSESSMENT



Self-Assessment

Reflect on the statements below and rate how strongly you agree with them from 1-4 - (1 being least agreement and 4 being most agreement).

	1	2	3	4
I reflect, uncover, and combat the myths and misinformation that society communicates and has communicated to me about the value of my identity(ies) and those who share my identity(ies).				
I have an understanding of structural oppression and the way that it shapes the work of planning and the workplace				
I practice courageous conversations that allow me to address micro- and macro- aggressions with my peers.				
I understand the difference between equality and equity. I consider how equity impacts the distribution of resources while taking into account the context and needs of individuals and communities.				
I have an understanding of implicit bias, and where it comes from. I interrogate its impact in my work and work to confront it.				
Considering my intersectional identities, I work to mitigate the ways my privilege(s) negatively impacts others.				

Why did you score yourself the way you did?

Where do you have the most room to grow your equity skills and knowledge?

What's one immediate action you can take to better practice equity and inclusion?

Organizational Assessment

Diversity and Representation: Describe the diversity of your organization. Are women represented at all levels of the organization? Are people of color represented at all levels of the organization? Who are the primary decision-makers?

Leadership: Does your leadership understand the importance of equity and inclusion in Planning? Has your leadership made equity and inclusion an organizational priority? Does your leadership practice equitable and inclusive leadership practices such as inclusive decision-making, transparency, empathy, emotional intelligence?

HR, Hiring and Recruitment: Do your human resource policies center equity? How could your hiring be more inclusive? How can your employee benefits support diverse needs? Is your onboarding process clear?

Organizational Culture and Inclusion: Is your organization welcoming and inclusive for people of all identities? Are your values explicit to all staff? How do you measure internal culture?

Organizational Assessment

Budget and Resource Allocation: How are your values of equity reflected in your budget? Does your resource allocation adequately reflect where there is the highest need? How do you assess those needs?

Internal Processes and Policies: Are all policies clearly and easily accessible communicated? How could the diversity of staff be supported more through inclusive policies?

External Policy and Program: What communities are impacted by your work? Where is feedback collected for your work? What values are communicated through your policies?

Community Engagement: In what ways have you included community voice in your work? How can language be more inclusive to communities? What equity principles are you practicing with communities?



LINKS & RESOURCES

Required Reading and Viewing

Planning History and Contexts

<u>A Case for Reparations</u>	Ta-Nahisi Coates
<u>Planning While Black</u>	Tamika Butler
<u>The Elephant in the Planning Room</u>	Giovania Tiarachristie
<u>The Color of Law</u>	Richard Rothstein
<u>The House We Live In</u>	PBS

US History of Racial Inequity

<u>13th - Film</u>	Ava DuVernay
<u>The Origin of Race in the USA</u>	PBS
<u>A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America</u>	Ronald Takaki

Personal, Interpersonal and Leadership

<u>White Fragility</u>	Robin DiAngelo
<u>Emergent Strategy</u>	Adrienne Maree Brown
<u>The Empathy Effect: Seven Neuroscience-Based Keys for Transforming the Way We Live, Love, Work, and Connect Across Differences</u>	Helen Riess MD
<u>White Supremacy Culture Primer</u>	Dismantling Racism
<u>The Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture</u>	Tema Okun
<u>How Microaggressions are Like Mosquito Bites</u>	Same Difference
<u>When Mindfulness and Racism Intersect</u>	Barry Boyce
<u>Mindfulness and Racial Bias: Resources For Deeper Understanding</u>	Mind and Life Institute

Small Group Activities

The following activities are a great way to foster discussion and exploration related to equity and inclusion inside your organization.

Self Reflection and Discussion Activity

Spend ten minutes individually on the questions below then gather in a small group (no more than ten) and have discussion using the questions in the Table Discussion section (feel free to add you own!).

Individual Write (10 minutes) about Early Experiences:

Think back to the earliest time you realized you had a racial or ethnic identity.

1. What did that experience teach you to **think** about your own race?
2. What did that experience teach you to **feel** about your own race?
3. What information or knowledge would have helped you to understand race in a more **complete way**?

Present Day: Think about where you are now?

1. In what ways has your understanding of your racial identity and race more generally shifted since your early experiences?
2. What new knowledge have you integrated into your understanding of race?

Table discussion:

1. What are the implications of those early experiences and where you are today?
2. How do you see these dynamics show up in your **work**?
3. How do you see these dynamics show up in your **workplace**?

Small Group Activities

For this activity refer to the Organizational Assessment above. As individuals fill out the organizational assessment and then join as a large group (no more than ten) and discuss the following:

1. Share the results of your organizational assessment with one another
2. Thinking about the key terms from the earlier section - where and how do you see these expressed in your workplace?
3. Thinking about key terms from the earlier section - where and how do you see them expressed through your planning work?
4. What are some opportunities you see to drive greater equity and inclusion in the lower-rated areas of your organizational reflection?

Normalizing Racial Equity and Inclusion

These discussion guides are an opportunity to normalize conversations about equity in the Planning workplace. We recommend small group (ten or less) discussions to explore the following resources and questions. The intention is not to arrive at an answer but to instead practice the skill of talking about race and grappling with issues of inequity.

Before you get started make sure you build some [community agreements](#) for your discussion groups.

What Does it Take to Embed a Racial Equity and Inclusion Lens?

Questions for Discussion:

- What are our spheres of influence?
- Where is the equity opportunity as it relates to data?
- How is data defined in context of government, community, etc.?
- How are equity values reflected in data and insights and strategies?

What does equity in civic engagement look like?

Questions for Discussion:

- Who is not at the table?
- Where are stakeholders and partners connecting?
- When is the right time to engage?
- How we communicate effectively?

Biking While Black

Questions for discussion:

- How is race important here?
- Where is the opportunity to insert equity?
- What role can Planning play in addressing this equity challenge?

The Racial Wealth Gap: What California Can Do About a Long-Standing Obstacle to Shared Prosperity

Questions for discussion:

- What conditions created this impact?
- How could equity-centered planning support this work?
- What measures of diversity, equity and inclusion are present?
- Where is this impact present in your work?



Resources

Communication and Interpersonal Tools

The Center for Social Inclusion has created a framework for discussions about race called [Affirm, Counter, Transform \(ACT\)](#) that can be a useful practice in organizational and interpersonal contexts.

Intent vs. Impact Tips

Your intent, the way in which you are communicating, doesn't necessarily send the messages and signals that help to achieve your desired goals, the impact. Intent vs. impact is not uncommon in human interaction. People can hear things via their own filters, and messages can become misunderstood.

When we say or do something that has an impact that is not our intention and it is brought to our attention it is our responsibility to mitigate the impact. Appropriate response can include but are not limited to:

- Resist the urge to defend yourself
- Don't "tone police"
- Apologize as soon as possible
- Explain what you've learned
- Don't expect anything in return
- Remember this doesn't make you a bad person
- Do your research
- Try harder in the future
- **Key Point:** You are not owed the acceptance of your apology.

If you were impacted by a microaggression:

- Practice self-care
- Decide if you want to respond in the moment or at all
- Identify if there are any allies in the room to whom you can look for support
- Consider long-term structures or resources you can access or develop to prevent from

Organizational Culture Tools

- [Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture](#)
- Race-based Caucuses can be a powerful tool in organizations. You can learn all about how to practice race-based caucusing [here](#).

Policy and Community Engagement Tools

- [Government Alliance on Race and Equity Resources and Tools](#)
- [Racial Equity Resource Guide by Kellogg Foundation](#)